FAMILY LIFE

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THE AMERICAN TEENAGER

Teenagers want to be more popular. No desire ranks higher than this, among the thousands who have been polled during the past 15 or 20 years by the Purdue Opinion Panel Polls, findings of which are now collected in a volume for popular presentation. While this finding would probably apply to most adults as well, its importance in the minds of the teenagers points the way to needed action on the part of parents, teachers, religious organizations, and the community in general, if the youngsters are to be enabled to make that "good adjustment" which is so often urged.

They have plenty of problems, of course, and girls have many more problems than boys. Most of them (80%) claim that they like school; but the flaws they describe certainly deserve attention and the deplorable spelling and grammar in the letters quoted reinforce the impression that the elementary schools and high schools are failing disastrously in the attempt to make their pupils use the English language correctly.

Newspaper accounts of this book (THE AMERICAN TEENAGER, by H. H. Remmers and D. H. Radler, pp. 727, no index, price $3.75 from Bobbs-Merrill Co., 730 N. Meridian st., Indianapolis 7, Ind., 1958) have emphasized the failure of teenagers to understand or believe in the basic elements of American self-government. Their views on love and marriage are equally worthy of attention. Lack of adequate sexual information is almost universal. Their strongly-expressed desire for greater help on this subject is certainly not being met by home, school, church, or community organizations; the results of this failure are often disastrous. Direct questions about marriage and the necessary preparation for it are not as common as might be expected in this sample; but they do want information: "They look for the answers from their parents, from other older relatives, and from their teachers. Half the time they don't get answers. Then they ask their peers, acquiring considerably more fancy than fact." Nearly one-fourth of the boys and girls complain, "My parents are afraid of discussing sex with me." Other studies have put the figure much higher.

Prime responsibility rests on the parents, these authors agree with every other authority; "secondarily, the re-

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sponsibility falls on the schools. The physical and emotional changes that typify the turbulent period of adolescence and the tricky social relationships that accompany them are entirely too important to be neglected by modern education. Some schools are already doing a great deal to help students in this area but others continue to ignore the problem completely. The young people themselves, their children and society at large all pay the price of continued ignorance and misinformation.

"Sex education needs to be more, however, than a mere short course in biology," the authors insist. "The birds and bees approach is entirely inadequate. At homes when parents discuss this subject with their children, and in the schools when teachers guide similar discussion (in marriage preparation courses, for example), the real target of the talk should be the teenage boy or girl's ultimate development into a responsible husband or wife, father or mother. It's only a short jump from high school to marriage and parenthood. Dating and the feelings and experiences which accompany it are important landmarks along the way. We need to recognize and let our young adults *know* we recognize that the physical expressions of affection are a legitimate and important part of their preparation for marriage and parenthood. This does not mean that we refuse to establish any standards of conduct. It does mean, however, that we must establish these standards on a reasonable basis and at a level which the average teenager is capable of achieving. Handholding, kissing, necking, and even petting are natural and almost unavoidable dating experiences. Let's not deny them to our teenage sons and daughters when we know full well they will do these things anyway, and if forbidden, with deep-felt, unhealthy and unnecessary guilt reactions."

"The two striking things about sex before marriage," say the authors at another point, "are these: (1) it's fun, and (2) it's dangerous. The real solution to the sex problem of the teenage boy or girl is to avoid the dangers but not miss out on all the fun." Many readers will wish that the authors had spelled out this "real solution" at much greater length!

"The young man or woman's feelings about his sexual urge and behavior depend almost entirely on the feelings of his parents," they assert at still another point. "This makes the responsibility (of the parents) greater than mere talk. Mother must set a good example for daughter and father for son. At the same time, every boy must have a pleasant relationship with his mother and every girl must have the same kind of warmth between her and her father. Granted such happy patterns of growth up to and through the teen years, children usually grow into happily married people without unwholesome or disgraceful experiences along the way." But what about the several million youngsters who, as a result of divorce or death, have no fathers and/or mothers? To answer this question was no part of the author's plan; but someone will have to answer it.

This is the more important because the authors (Dr. Remmers is a psychologist at Purdue University, Mr. Radler a professional writer, who is mainly responsible for the text), in discussing the formation of the all-important attitudes toward life, find that "the typical teen-ager is responsive to the feelings and opinions of his peers on such questions as what to wear to a party, what clubs to join, how to act when out with the gang, and personal grooming . . . On the other hand, he is sensitive to the feelings and opinions of his parents and other adults about his political feelings, about how he spends his money, and about his personal problems or troubles."

The chapters on "The dilemma of parents" and "How we can help" provide much useful material. The youngsters have many well justified criticisms of the way their parents lecture them, nag about unimportant or irrelevant matters, and fail to practice what they preach, and 90% of the teenagers urge that more problems be talked over in Family Council. There is still much need for education of parents as to the management of this important institution. It can't be organized as it supposedly was in the legendary case where the father enjoined, "Now looky here, son, if you're going to take part in our Family Council you've got to learn to keep your mouth shut the same as I do!"

Perhaps even more important is the granting of responsibility. "For every adolescent there'll come a time—and soon—when he must assume adult responsibilities and act as a fully mature person. But to achieve maturity, he must grow toward it. No one is so flexible that he can be a child for 21 years and then, by magic, become an adult overnight." T. V. Smith is quoted: "To tell a man what to think is, in every long run, the working equivalent of telling him not to think at all." How, then, can we as parents, teachers, and citizens, help our youth? Arnold Gesell is quoted: "The task of the culture is to help where it can, not so much by exhortation or appeals to honor as by reason and constructive analysis which places problems of choice and decision in perspective. The adolescent lacks perspective for the simple reason that he has not yet experienced the fuller maturity which comes with time. To compensate for this handicap, he needs to take increasing responsibility upon himself so that he can build up a perspective based on self-acquired morals and self-reliance. Independence of thought and decision should be fostered as a safeguard against anxiety and self-depreciation."

It is precisely at this point of helping the teenager to take increasing responsibility that home, school, church, and community organizations alike are failing disastrously.

The purpose of this book is not primarily to solve all the problems of adolescence, but to tell what they are *as the teenager himself sees or understands them.* The wealth of material presented has scarcely even been hinted in this brief review. The book should be studied.

Inexpensive Pamphlets

AMERICAN JEWS: THEIR STORY, by Oscar Handlin. Pp. 48, price 35c from

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 505 Madison ave., New York 22, N.Y.

WHERE TO WRITE FOR BIRTH AND DEATH RECORDS, Pp. 10, price 15c from Supt. of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. (Catalog No. FS 2.102:53/3/958.)

CHANGING ATTITUDES TOWARD HUMAN GENETICS AND EUGENICS, by Amram Scheinfeld. Pp. 9, price 25c from American Eugenics Society, 230 Park ave., New York, N.Y.

COUNSELING PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH MENTAL HANDICAPS, Pp. 108, single copy free to those professionally concerned, additional copies $1 each, from The Woods Schools for Exceptional Children, Langhorne, Pa.

STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER, Pp. 15, price 7c from National Dairy Council, 111 N. Canal st., Chicago 6, Ill.—Helpful information and counsel for adolescent boys.

CONSUMER EDUCATION PROGRAM, Pp. 13, free on request to Consumer Education Dept., Household Finance Corp., 919 N. Michigan ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

IT'S A WONDERFUL WORLD FOR CHILDREN. Price 25c from The Wonderful World for Children, 1 Orchard Parkway, White Plains, New York. Places to explore and things to do in town and at home.

SO YOU ARE ADOPTED! Pp. 18, price 35c from Guidance Center of New Rochelle, 81 Centre Avenue, New Rochelle, New York. For adopted teenagers and their parents.

SOCIO-GUIDRAMAS. Price 50c each from Occu-Press, 489 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N.Y. Playlets for young people that dramatize some typical teen-age problems.

YOU AND YOUR ADOPTED CHILD by Edna J. Le Shan. Price 25c from Public Affairs Pamphlets, 22 East 38 Street, New York 16, N.Y.

GOOD NEIGHBORS, by Elizabeth Ogg. Price 25c from Public Affairs Pamphlets, 22 East 38 Street, New York 16, N.Y. How community welfare councils are organized.

A PAN-HUMANIST MANIFESTO. Pp. 32, price 20c from School of Living, Lane's End Homestead, Brookville, Ohio. Ideas for a new, world-wide social system where man's first allegiance is to his fellow men.

Around the World

INTERNATIONAL Congress of Widows was held during the Brussels Exposition, with delegates from Belgium and the Belgian Congo, France, Holland, Luxemburg, Switzerland, Italy, and Great Britain. Committees considered the widow's problems from almost every possible point of view.

ENGLAND'S TV authorities have banned cigaret commercials during children's programs and have advised commercial networks not to use them immediately before or after junior programs. Beer and alcohol blurbs were already barred.

INSTITUTE FOR MARRIAGE-AND FAMILY RESEARCH has been established in Basel, Switzerland, (Colmarerstrasse 118) by the Christian Conference on Questions of Marriage and the Family, an organization created three years ago under the leadership of Dr. B. Harnik of St. Gall. Director of the new Institute is Dr. Theodor Bovet.

EUGENIC STERILIZATION should be more widely used in many countries, to reduce the excessive birth rate, says L. N. Jackson, honorary editor, in the

Jan., 1959, issue of "News of Population and Birth Control" (69 Eccleston Square, London SW 1, England.) "Contraceptive techniques are only moderately successful and, even if much more intensively employed than hitherto, are clearly not enough in the absence of strong motivation," Dr. Jackson asserts. It has been reported that vasectomy has the approval of Prime Minister Nehru.

MOST CANADIAN PROVINCES make some provision for civil marriages, but a Gallup Poll found that nearly two-thirds of the Dominion's population believe only religious ceremonies should be permitted.

BAL KALYAN is the name of a new monthly magazine to be published in both English and Hindi, "dealing with news from different children's societies all over India, the difficulties and handicaps in the way of social workers, officials, and writers, children's problems and their solutions," etc. Inquiries may be addressed to N. K. Paliwal, Secretary, H. O. Hardwar, U.P., India.

MARRIAGE IN THE SOVIET UNION should be surrounded with more formality and beauty, A. N. Shelepin, first secretary of the Young Communist League told the national congress of the organization. At present the wedding ceremony consists mainly of the registration of the names of the couple (after a week's advance notice) and the issue of a certificate. Mr. Shelepin advocated the return of some form of solemn vows to make the ceremony memorable for a lifetime, and suggested that wedding rings might also be worn—"there's nothing religious in this custom," he assured his hearers.

MOMBASA, East Africa, now has several contraceptive centres, promoted by its Family Planning Association. Foam tablets are given away or sold at cost and some use is also being made of the rubber sponge with salt solution.

Educational Notes

MOST MINISTERS would rather do marriage counseling than preach sermons, if a survey made in the United Presbyterian denomination is representative. Out of 10 pastoral functions listed in a questionnaire, more pastors marked "counseling" as providing "the most personal enjoyment and sense of accomplishment" than any other function. Preaching ran a close second. But a large group (14%) of the pastors felt that their counseling contributed more to family stability of their parishioners than did any other one phase of their ministry. Median amount of time spent on counseling was reported as five hours a week. Most of this is done in urban, not rural, churches. Seminary should have given them more help for this purpose, said 78%; most of them felt that they wanted more training in this field at the present time. It is surprising to find that the average pastor performs only four wedding ceremonies a year; 11% reported none. About 60% of the pastors gave pre-marital counseling. This study was made by the Office of Family Education Research of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. (1105 Witherspoon bldg., Philadelphia 7, Pa.) and is reported in its *Bulletin*.

PREGNANCIES of girls under 16 years of age in the schools of Washington, D.C. numbered 185 officially reported (169 Negro, 16 white) during the seven months from Sept., 1957, through April, 1958. They occurred in 22 of

the 23 junior high schools and in four elementary schools. One child in the sixth grade had her second illegitimate pregnancy. Five girls (all Negroes) were said to be 12 years old; 22 girls (20 Negro, two white) were 13. Most of the fathers were said to be teenage boys. Many other pregnancies, not enumerated, were listed by their physicians as "withdrawal from school for personal reasons."

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Studying the Fetus

Twin births have always been difficult to predict, even fairly late in pregnancy. By a new method of electrocardiography, they can now be detected as early as the 11th week.

This is one of the results of a study of pregnant women, made by Dr. Sol David Larks and Dr. Kanak Das Gupta of the UCLA School of Medicine. An important part of the research has been carried out at the headquarters of the American Institute of Family Relations. Expectant mothers, enrolled in the Institute's classes for Childbirth Training, proved eager to volunteer as subjects, and one of the Institute's rooms has been devoted to this purpose for some months past.

Preliminary findings published in the *American Heart Journal* include recording of positive fetal ECG as early as the 12th week of pregnancy—in general two to six weeks earlier than the fetal heart tones can be heard with a stethoscope. Cardiac anomalies can be detected as early as the 12th to 16th week.

Of special interest to the obstetrician is the detection of the position of the embryo. Breech presentation can be identified definitely, and rotation of the fetus can be followed. A normal rotation from breech to vertex presentation is found to occur about the 20th week.

The research is continuing.

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PUBLIC HEALTH educators are seriously alarmed over the increase in venereal disease infections among teenagers. In Connecticut there has been a rise of 116% in reported cases of syphilis and 64% of gonorrhea, among adolescents. Lack of proper sex education is blamed, the authorities insisting that more emphasis must be put on moral standards and ethical values.

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THE SHOOK-UP GENERATION, by Harrison E. Salisbury. Pp. 244, price $3.95 from Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33rd st., New York 16, N.Y., 1958.

Excellent treatment by a leading journalist (of the New York Times staff.) "A good family can do more for the adolescent in trouble than all the social experts in the catalog," he declares. Many factors have been made responsible for the spread of juvenile delinquency in the worst forms but "the source of the disturbance is more prosaic. It lies in the home and in the community in which the youngster lives. It begins early in his life. It starts with lack of love and care and attention. There is nothing mysterious about it. In most cases it can be detected years before the child's conduct has caused more than trivial annoyance. Almost any good third-grade teacher can point out the youngsters who will be adolescent problems." The means of dealing with the problem are well known, he insists; the methods are right at hand. The only trouble is that the public doesn't want to be bothered by having to think and act—to do the obvious things.

NEW BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

THE CHANGING AMERICAN PARENT, by Daniel R. Miller and Guy E. Swanson. Pp. 302, price $6.50 from John Wiley & Sons, 440 Fourth ave., New York 16, N.Y., 1958.

Each generation has its own methods of child rearing based on the ideals and practices of its own culture, we are reminded by the University of Michigan psychologist and sociologist who produced this book. They consider that the American pattern until recently was an individualistic one which exalted independence, self-reliance. Now, they consider that the nation has moved to what they call a welfare-bureaucracy, with much more security, contentment, and avoidance of great enterprise and experimentation. This should change the type of child guidance used by parents; and they confirmed their view by a detailed study of 600 families, representing all social, economic, and educational levels, in Detroit. The family changed sometime ago from a patriarchal organization to a companionate, and has now gone farther to become a "colleague" family, in which each member enriches and promotes the common family by specialization based on talent, interest, and function. "We believe there has been a general strengthening of some of the traditional family patterns along revised lines," they report. "We should guess that the requirements for personal stability made by large specialized organizations, together with the economic security they provide, will begin to slow and then to lower the rate of divorce and separation in the population and will raise again the criteria of competence and the gifts of homemaking to renewed importance in the choice of a marriage partner." Children are now becoming "junior partners who are wanted and needed and whose opinions are sought and given careful consideration, but who must have proper seniority before being admitted to full participation in deciding the family's course. There is also a renewed interest in limiting the child's freedom." Because parents have more security and can and do enjoy their children more, they are having larger families. The blurring of distinctions between the work of males and of females is leading to an increase in psychiatric problems. This is a technical book, heavily loaded with theoretical concepts and statistical material. Thoughtful readers will find on almost every page statements which they will want to challenge. But it is on the whole a very stimulating and interesting volume that will spur many readers to greater thought and more careful observation.

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THE DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN MALE, by the editors of *Look*. Pp. 66 (no index), price $2.95 from Random House, 475 Madison ave., New York 22, N.Y., 1958.

Three articles which originally appeared in *Look* and are brought together here with particularly repulsive drawings by way of "illustration." They are respectively "Why do women dominate him?, by J. Robert Moskin; "Why is he afraid to be different?", by George B. Leonard jr., and "Why does he work so hard?", by William Attwood. While these papers make no pretense to a scientific treatment of a very

important subject, and are probably intended primarily to interest and shock readers, they do challenge a great deal of serious thought. Like many other such studies, they apply mainly (if at all!) to a small segment of the population—the middle or upper middle class.

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THE PSYCHODYNAMICS OF FAMILY LIFE, by Nathan W. Ackerman. Pp. 379, price $6.75 from Basic Books, 59 Fourth ave., New York 3, N.Y., 1958.

Dr. Ackerman is, among other distinctions, clinical director and research psychiatrist of the Family Mental Health Clinic sponsored by the Jewish Family Service in New York City. He holds that an individual can be treated only when his whole family is understood and, if possible, also treated. His attitude is eclectic. Disregarding the many cults that have developed in the field of psychotherapy he thinks it preferable to recognize only two kinds: individual therapy and group therapy. Each of these has its place and he describes this in some detail. The book contains a number of somewhat detailed case histories and a good bibliography.

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LOVE, SKILL AND MYSTERY, by Theodor Bovet. Pp. 188, price $3.50 from Doubleday and Co., Garden City, L.I., N.Y., 1958.

Husbands and wives need much more information, skill, and training than they now get for marriage, says Dr. Bovet; but this is not enough. "Love should govern the whole field of sexuality, and God should govern the whole field of love." His insistence that the marital relationship demands the best that each partner can put into it is particularly welcome since so many books on this subject stress "techniques." Dr. Bovet is a Swiss physician who has long specialized in marriage counseling, and who is deeply imbued with Protestant theology. The book is a somewhat revised translation of one that has for years been popular in Germany. David Mace, who writes an introduction, comments that "Behind the easy, effortless style with which Dr. Bovet writes there is a wealth of tried and tested wisdom which is the fruit of deep reflection . . . The extraordinary breadth of this thought, combining as it does the approaches of medicine, of psychology, of philosophy, and of theology, entitles him to be heard with attention and respect." In spite of a few unimportant errors, the book should prove as widely helpful in the United States and Canada as it has in Europe for the past decade.

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THE CALL GIRL, by Harold Greenwald. Pp. 245, price $4.50 from Ballantine Books, 101 Fifth ave., New York 3, N.Y., 1958.

In recent years there have been few important contributions to the study of prostitution. Psychoanalyst Greenwald had six New York City call girls as patients for therapy; through them he interviewed 10 others and got some of his patients in turn to interview and report to him on 10 additional subjects. This is a small and unreliable body of evidence! Such persons are notorious liars but Dr. Greenwald (executive director of the Association for Applied Psychoanalysis) gives no indication of any unusual skepticism. He defines a call girl as a prostitute who works more or less independently, and whose fee is not less than $20. They are the

aristocrats of the profession, he says, and those he interviewed all "earned" in the neighborhood of $20,000 a year. His principal source of information was "Beverly, who had been a call girl for 16 of her 33 years." She told him she had "been to bed with 92,000 men." This figures out at 16 a day or an income of $115,000 a year, making no allowance for leap years, or for any vacations. Naturally, all of the women are "mental cases." Fifteen said they had tried to commit suicide. Not one of them came from a normal parental background. Dr. Greenwald concludes by urging the need for greater psychotherapeutic resources, perhaps of a new kind, to rehabilitate prostitutes; he agrees it is even more important to prevent the development of a new generation in this trade — the commonly used word "profession" seems very inappropriate! "The girl who is tied to her family with bonds of love and affection does not become a call girl," he declares. The basic problem, then, is to strengthen family life, which in turn depends on a widespread social reorganization. Dr. Greenwald's book is a serious contribution to the subject, but needs to be used cautiously.

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THE OLDER POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES, by Henry D. Sheldon. Pp. 223, price $6 from John Wiley & Sons, 440 Fourth ave., New York 16, N.Y., 1958.

In this digest and summary of statistical material brought together by the U.S. Census, Dr. Sheldon presents detailed information which will be invaluable to every one who wants to know just what is going on in this age group. Clark Tibbits, who is assistant director of the Special Staff on Aging of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, writes a chapter of "summary and comment." One of the conspicuous findings is that, while 70 years ago most adults tended to move directly "from parental and household responsibilities into the status of old age," there is now an identifiable period of middle age, after the children have left home but before anything like "old age" could be catalogued. "The typical husband and wife may now expect as much as 14 years of life together after their last child has left home and before the appearance of other events and circumstances that mark the transition into old age."

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PROBLEMS OF ADDICTION AND HABITUATION, edited by Paul H .Hoch and Joseph Zubin. Pp. 250, price $6.50 from Grune and Stratton, 381 Fourth ave., New York 16, N.Y., 1958.

Proceedings of the 47th annual meeting of the American Psychopathological Assn. While the book is directed to specialists, it contains a great deal of general interest and value. The largest number of readers will perhaps be attracted to Carney Landis' survey of the evidence on the "Physiological and psychological effects of the use of coffee." His verdict is favorable: except for a few persons with idiosyncrasies, the drinker is benefited up to the amount of four to six cups, and there is no possibility of a real addiction. Much of the book is naturally taken up with alcoholism. Psychiatrist Karl M. Bowman of San Francisco spoke on "Some problems of addiction" in connection with the Samuel W. Hamilton Award which was presented to him, and insisted that the smoking of tobacco must be given far more attention, as one of the most serious problems facing civilized man—though he con-

sidered alcoholism "possibly our most serious problem." He declared that marijuana "is a rather unimportant drug and does not merit all the attention it has been receiving," and he urged complete abandonment of the present method of dealing with drug addiction "through the almost exclusively punitive approach," and cited evidence that handling it as a medical problem would be far more effective. This has been done in Great Britain, where the government reports that there are only 300 addicts, mostly over 30 years of age, while the head of the Federal Narcotics Bureau in the United States estimates that we have more than 60,000 addicts, close to half of whom are under 25 years of age.

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FUN FOR THE NOT-SO-YOUNG, by Sid G. Hedges. Pp. 142, (no index,) price $3.75 from Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th st., New York 16, N.Y., 1958.

Mr. Hedges is a prolific English writer of books on recreation and this little volume, imported from Great Britain, is packed with useful ideas for the Senior Citizens. A convenient feature is its division into sections on "Fun for one," "Fun for two or three," and "Fun together."

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FAMILY GUIDE TO TEEN-AGE HEALTH, by Edward T. Wilkes. Pp. 244, price $4 from Ronald Press, 15 E. 26th st., New York 10, N.Y., 1958.

There are plenty of books on the health of children, but few that deal specifically with the adolescent. Dr. Wilkes, pediatrician in private practice in New York City, has for the past 15 years devoted his time largely to teen-agers.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGY, ed. by Joseph H. Roucek. Pp. 1209, price $12 from Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th st., New York, N.Y., 1958.

Encyclopedic treatment by leading sociologists, covering most of the civilized world. The chapter on the family, by C. C. Zimmerman, holds that family life in the U.S.A. has become polarized (more "good" families and more "bad" ones) but that there is now a trend toward family solidarity, which he thinks the public has largely developed for itself in the face of very unsound treatment by most American sociologists.

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THE CATHOLIC VIEWPOINT ON MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY, by John L. Thomas. Pp. 191 (no index), price $3.50 from Doubleday & Co., 575 Madison ave., New York 22, N.Y., 1958.

Roman Catholic couples encounter many of the same family problems that others face under modern living conditions, but they must solve these within the framework of their own system of values, Dr. Thomas points out. He has written this book to help his own people but it will also be informative to others. He discusses the general doctrine of the church, the many conflicting elements in American life, and special problems of wide distribution such as mixed marriages, birth control, and divorce. Dr. Thomas, a leading Jesuit student of the subject and professor of sociology at St. Louis University, always writes clearly and cogently.

Other Books Received

CREATIVE VISUALIZATION, by Andrew Wiehl. Pp. 112 (no index), price $3 from Greenwich Book Publishers, 489 Fourth ave., New York 17, N.Y., 1959.

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